U.S. MISSION TO INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN GENEVA

STRENGTHENING WHO PREPAREDNESS FOR AND RESPONSE TO HEALTH EMERGENCIES

By **U.S. MISSION GENEVA**

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Strengthening WHO Preparedness for and Response to Health Emergencies

150th Session of the Executive Board at the World Health Organization (WHO)

Geneva, Switzerland – Virtual Meeting

Agenda Items 15.1

January 24-29, 2022

Statement Delivered by Loyce Pace
Assistant Secretary for Global Affairs
Department of Health and Human Services

As Delivered

Thank you to the distinguished delegate from Japan for the invitation to speak and to Mr. Chair for the floor.

The United States strongly supports the ongoing efforts to strengthen WHO and

make it more agile, transparent, and efficient.

On behalf of more than 40 Member States, we are pleased to propose a Decision for the Executive Board, asking Member States of WHO and States Parties of the International Health Regulations (IHR) of 2005, to discuss targeted amendments to the IHR (2005) and address specific issues, challenges, or gaps that are crucial to their effective implementation. The draft decision also requests the Working Group on Preparedness & Response (WGPR) establish a dedicated process for in-depth discussions of targeted amendments to the IHR and facilitate a transparent, Member State-led process.

The decision also notes the importance of equity and equitable access to medical countermeasures and the negative impacts of misinformation and disinformation related to the pandemic. We agree that we must all do better.

The United States led an inclusive and transparent process to develop this decision, as we are mindful that updating and modernizing the IHR are critical to ensuring the world is better prepared for and can respond to, the next pandemic.

Finally, the United States formally transmitted its proposals for targeted amendments to the IHR (2005) to the Director General consistent with IHR Article 55 for circulation to States Parties at least four months in advance of WHA 75.

We are confident of continued progress on the various complementary WHO strengthening work streams: (1) targeted amendments to the International Health Regulations (IHR) (2005), (2) a full review of by the WGPR (3) an intergovernmental negotiating body (INB) to develop a new international instrument on pandemic preparedness and response, and (4) governance improvements at WHO, starting with an informal group and then establishing a Task Team of Member States to work with the Secretariat.

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